



New Implementation being scheduled for STARS

The STARS Team is working toward an April 2005 implementation!

The STARS Project Management Office has recently submitted a revised project plan to the Director of OMBE/CFO, Susan Grant with detailed plans for an April 2005 implementation. This plan includes the following schedule of key activities:

1/3/05 – 1/21/05	Conduct STARS Integration Testing – Cycle 1
2/4/05 – 2/24/05	Conduct STARS Integration Testing – Cycle 2
2/1/05 – 2/14/05	Conduct Train-The-Trainer
3/1/05 – 3/29/05	Conduct End User Training

Under the revised plan, a separate team will be created to focus on Deployment and Implementation activities. This team will be led by Sharon Marchant, CFO for the National Energy Technology Laboratory. Ms. Marchant will be focusing on STARS go-live issues, identifying and meeting end-user and customers' needs, and creating a smooth transition for the Department. Watch for further details as they become available.

STARS Sub-Teams Focus on Key Priorities

Special sub-teams have been created to focus functional and technical subject matter experts on resolving issues critical to the STARS deployment. The focus areas addressed by these sub-teams include user acceptance test issues, interfaces, STARS values, data conversion, account/data reconciliation, system performance, financial reporting and end-user support. This month we spotlight two of these sub-teams.

Interfaces

The Interfaces Sub-team will ensure that each of the STARS interfaces is properly designed, coded according to the design, and thoroughly tested.

One of the major interfaces the team is working on is the Integrated Contractor (IC) Interface. Each IC will submit a monthly file to update STARS. The interface will split the data received according to transaction type and accounting string and update detailed Purchasing (PO) and Accounts Payable (AP) information in the corresponding STARS modules. Fixed Asset (FA), Accounts Receivable (AR), and other journal information will be loaded directly into the General Ledger (GL).

A key issue in constructing this interface has been ensuring DISCAS and MARS values were accurately cross-walked to STARS values and to the proper SGL

STARS Interfaces include:

- Integrated Contractor
- Non-Integrated Contactor
- Corporate Human Resource Information System (CHRIS)
- Working Capital Fund (WCF)
- Host-to-Host (Payment Feed to Treasury)
- Automated Standardized Application for Payment (ASAP)
- Government Transportation System (GTS)
- Funds Distribution System (FDS)
- Travel Manager (TM+)
- Field Budget System
- Employee (DoelInfo to STARS)
- DOE-CWeb
- Labor Distribution System (LDS)
- Intra-governmental Payment and Collections (IPAC)
- Small Purchase System (SPS)
- Electronic Certification System (ECS)
- Vendor Inquiry Payments Electronic Reporting System (VIPERS)
- 1099 (Transmission to Treasury)

accounts. To solve this issue, each module that is affected by the interface (PO, AP, & GL) has a representative on the IC Interface Sub-team. The module representative is responsible for analyzing and verifying the entries created in their module and ensuring the accuracy of all interfaced entries.

The IC interface will process a large portion of DOE's total spending and the STARS Interface Team has been working hard to ensure that the interface will upload the data correctly as well as validate the cross-walked IC information received. The STARS Team has programmed the IC interface to run in two modes: *validate only* and *update*. *Validate only* allows DOE to verify that the IC's accounting information conforms to DOE account code structures and logic prior to posting it in STARS. *Update* mode takes validated IC data and posts it in STARS. A major milestone for the Integrated Contractors is to submit properly formatted and balanced files using the latest SGL crosswalk by November 1, 2004.

End-user Training and Support

In August 2004, many of the STARS Trainers participated in a pilot train-the-trainer session to validate the course material and practice teaching hands-on exercises that will be included in the STARS instructor-led classes. The training materials are being enhanced to reflect changes recommended by the trainers during that session. All of the STARS trainers will participate in additional hands-on, train-the-trainer sessions approximately two months before STARS goes live.

In addition to training, the STARS team is also planning for post-implementation support by creating on-line reference materials and system navigations that will guide users through step-by-step instructions for completing accounting entries in the system. Help Desk support will also be operational for system support after deployment. The on-line reference materials in combination with the Help Desk will help support end-users as they first begin to gain knowledge of and function in the STARS environment.

Mid-Year Data Conversion Strategy Highlights

The deployment of STARS in the middle of a fiscal year will require that the DISCAS/MARS Fiscal Year 2004 General Ledger ending balances be converted. Also, at the time of implementation the FY 2005 current year balances will need to be converted. A data conversion strategy was chosen after a thorough analysis of several alternatives. The selected strategy meets critical requirements while minimizing changes to the existing conversion programs and takes advantage of existing data clean-up initiatives.

The basic steps for the mid-year data conversion are as follows:

- 1) Convert and reconcile FY 2004 General Ledger to create STARS FY 2005 opening balances.
- 2) Convert and reconcile FY 2005 General Ledger as each fiscal month is closed.
- 3) Generate and load STARS General Ledger entries with cumulative balances as of September 30, 2004, using DISCAS summary data from the current fiscal year to satisfy reporting requirements.
- 4) Convert and reconcile sub-ledger data (DISCAS summary data sets) for Purchasing, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, and Fixed Assets modules at time of implementation.
- 5) Perform final reconciliation of STARS to DISCAS and MARS.

The mid-year data conversion strategy was documented by the STARS Development Team and may be accessed on the I-MANAGE Program site at <http://www.mbe.doe.gov/ME2-5/i-manage/ExecSumMidYrConvStrat.doc>.

STARS Project Information

I-MANAGE Program Site: <http://www.mbe.doe.gov/me2-5/i-manage/>

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